

Description of Request: Provide directed funding of \$7.836 million to complete construction of the Readiness Center Phase 3—London Joint Support Operations Center located in Laurel County, Kentucky. Of this amount, \$646,200 is scheduled for design cost and \$208,000 is for supervision, inspection, and overhead costs. This third and final phase of construction will include administrative space, aircraft hangar space, and paving for hangar aprons, taxi ways, and aircraft parking. Aircraft will include various fixed wing aircraft and helicopters, OH-58s, UH-60s, and a C-130. The project is required to fully house the Joint Support Operations equipment and personnel in one facility located in the vicinity of operations. Currently the operation is spread over several facilities approximately 100 miles apart. At the conclusion of this project, the unit will be able to respond quicker and in a much more efficient manner which will allow a greater return on investment funds spent on the operation.

HONORING WALLACE CARDEN,
WORLD WAR II VETERAN AND
SURVIVOR OF THE NAZI BERGA
POW CAMP

HON. SPENCER BACHUS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 21, 2008

Mr. BACHUS. Madam Speaker, on Memorial Day 2008, let us take time to reflect on the courage and indomitable will of a special group of World War II veterans: the survivors of the Berga POW camp.

Wallace Carden of Vestavia Hills in Alabama's Sixth District was one of the soldiers imprisoned in a cruel camp that simultaneously showed the worst of man's inhumanity—and the transcendent ability of the human spirit to endure and ultimately triumph.

Berga was a German concentration camp. Three hundred and fifty American soldiers were sent there after being captured during the Battle of the Bulge. Some were exiled there because they were Jewish. Wallace Carden, then just 19 years old, was detained simply because Nazi officers thought he looked Jewish.

The soldiers were ill-fed, heavily worked, and badly beaten; some were even killed. By day, they were forced to dig underground tunnels for weapons factories; by night, they shivered in squalid conditions, emaciated from hunger. But confronted with such inhumanity, these American soldiers persevered. They gave each other support, equally shared what little food they had, held faith in their country and God, and never allowed their spirit to be consumed by the evil and hate surrounding them.

Though physically separated from their brothers on the battlefield, the Berga soldiers honored America with their determination and will to survive. In the decades since, Wallace Carden and his fellow soldiers have provided important personal testimonials about Nazi brutality and prejudice, so that succeeding generations never forget the Holocaust and fully appreciate what it took for freedom to triumph during World War II.

Congressional Resolution H. Res. 883 rightly recognizes the service and sacrifice of the U.S. soldiers imprisoned at Berga, and I am a

proud cosponsor. Their story is an integral part of the history of World War II, and their conduct under the most extreme and trying conditions an enormous credit to themselves and their country.

For my part, I want to thank Wallace Carden for his service to his community and country. Alabama is proud of him, and it is appropriate that on this Memorial Day recognition is being bestowed on Mr. Carden as well as an entire group of American soldiers whose soaring spirit should continue to inspire all of us.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ROBERT E. ANDREWS

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 21, 2008

Mr. ANDREWS. Madam Speaker, I was not present on May 20, 2008. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on the following rollcall votes: rollcall No. 331, rollcall No. 332, rollcall No. 333, rollcall No. 334, rollcall No. 335, rollcall No. 336, rollcall No. 337.

INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION AMENDING THE FEDERAL CHARTER OF THE GOLD STAR WIVES

HON. JAMES P. MORAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 21, 2008

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce legislation that will amend the Federal charter of the Gold Star Wives of America to allow their officers to fully participate in the legislative process. This is a change that is long overdue and releases these advocates from the unnecessary and likely unconstitutional restraints in their charter.

The Gold Star Wives have a long and storied history of advocacy on behalf of the families of our Nation's fallen heroes. From World War II through today's current conflicts, these military widows and widowers have shaped the perception we have about families' struggle after the death of a loved one in military service. In doing so, they have risen from humble beginnings to become a force on Capitol Hill. Today there are more than 60 chapters nationwide that count more than 10,000 widows and widowers as their members.

The Gold Star Wives are hardly an idle group, winning key legislative victories to reinstate benefits for those whose second spouses have died, and improve medical and education benefits for survivors. They have consistently fought for and won increases in dependency and indemnity compensation affecting over 300,000 survivors who depend on that benefit.

It is toward the aim of helping the Gold Star Wives maintain their voice in Congress that I am introducing new legislation today that will allow all of the Gold Star Wives to freely advocate for the legislative matters that are most important to them.

When the Federal charter for the Gold Star Wives was drafted in 1980, it included a broad prohibition that none of the officers of the organization could influence any legislation in

any manner. Since the Gold Star Wives rely on the volunteer work of its board and officers, the prohibition particularly hurts their advocacy on behalf of military families.

Other patriotic and national organizations—such as AMVETS, the VFW, the American Legion, and the Military Order of the Purple Heart—do not share this unusual restriction. I believe that this provision in the Gold Star Wives Federal charter is punitive, not practically enforceable and potentially an unconstitutional infringement upon the freedom to petition the Government. My legislation solution is simple—it will strike this single restriction from the Gold Star Wives Federal charter.

Madam Speaker, the Gold Star Wives is a top-notch organization that effectively advocates on behalf of military families. It is my intention that Congress pass this commonsense change to their charter and relieve the Gold Star Wives from this unnecessary and unconstitutional burden.

HONORING JOSEPH J. WALTERS
OF BROOKSVILLE, FLORIDA

HON. GINNY BROWN-WAITE

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 21, 2008

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise to honor Joseph K. Walters, a constituent from Brooksville, Florida, who served with honor and distinction during World War II. It was during an aerial battle over Belgium in 1943 that Mr. Walters' plane was shot down, and he was forced to parachute into enemy territory. As a result of the landing and damage from the plane, Mr. Walters was wounded in battle, suffering a broken arm and earning him his Purple Heart.

On the morning of August 17, 1943, SSG Joe Walters, a ball turret gunner on a B-17 bomber in the European campaign of World War II, had already flown 14 missions into enemy territory. This morning's mission was to bomb German ball bearing plants. Once the squadron took flight, they came under fierce attack from enemy gunners. Thankfully they were able to drop their bombs on the targets, but on the return flight to England came under attack and all 10 men in his airplane were forced to bail out.

Landing in a fruit orchard in Boris, Belgium, Mr. Walters was helped by local farmer Lambert Tilkin and his son, men who were part of the underground resistance and who were able to get Mr. Walters to safety. It was during this parachute landing that Mr. Walters suffered his broken arm. Thankfully his arm healed during the 109-day journey back to England, a journey that had him walking through France, over the Pyrenees and through Spain.

In addition to his Purple Heart, Mr. Walters has received the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Air Medal with 3 Oak Leaf Clusters, the World War II Victory Medal, The American Campaign Medal, The European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign Medal with 1 Bronze Service Star, The Army Good Conduct Medal and the Honorable Lapel Button.

Madam Speaker, soldiers like Joseph J. Walters should be recognized for their service to our Nation and for their commitment and sacrifices in battle. I am honored to present